

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DHA-02 IO-13 EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4594

INFO CINCPAC

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 4516

NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT PFOR MPOL SHUM CH UR US

SUBJECT: SZETO KEUNG COMMENTS ON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS,
HUMAN RIGHTS AND MILITARY MODERNIZATION

SUMMARY: CHIEF NCNA (HONG KONG) REPORTER SZETU KEUNG TOLD
CONGENOFF THAT RECENT PRC PRESS ATTENTION TO MILITARY MODERNIZA-
TION WAS IN PART A RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET THREAT, BUT ALSO
INVOLVED THE REORDING OF DEFENSE PRIORITIES AFTER THE PURGE
OF THE "GANG OF FOUR". IN ADDITION SZEITU RAISED THE ISSUE OF
THE CARTER ADMINSTRATION'S CRITICISM OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE
SOVIET UNION, EXPRESSING THE VIEW THAT "THERE MUST BE SOME
POLTICIAL REASON BEHIND THE ADMINISTRATION'S ACTIONS".
END SUMMARY.

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1. IN AN APRIL 20 CONVERSATION WITH CONGEOFF OVER LUNCH,
SZETU KEUNG STATED THAT THE RECENT ROUND OF ARTICLES CALLING
FOR ACCELERATED DEFENSE MODERNIZATION WERE PART OF THE ANTI-
"GANG OF FOUR" CAMPAIGN AND WERE DESIGNED TO PLACE DEFENSE
MODERNIZATION AND MILITARY TACTICS IN THEIR PROPER PERSPECTIVE.
CONGENOFF VOLUNTEERED THAT SOME OBSERVERS HAVE NOTED THE
ARTICLES SEEM TO BE REFUTING MAOIST EMPHASIS ON THE IMPORTANCE

OF THE HUMAN FACTOR IN WAR. SZETU RESPONDED THAT THIS WAS NOT TRUE SINCE THE "GANG OF FOUR" HAD DISTORTED MAOIST MILITARY TACTICS IN RECENT YEARS. THE ARTICLE WAS DESIGNED TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT; AFTER ALL, "HOW CAN ONE FIGHT A WAR WITHOUT WEAPONS?"

2. CONGENOFF THEN STATED THAT THE RECENT ARTICLES MENTION INTENSIFIED ARMS COMPETITION BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION AND WONDERED IF THERE WAS A FEELING IN THE PRC THAT THE SOVIET THREAT WAS INCREASING. SZETU SAID THAT WESTERNERS TEND TO TAKE A SHORT RANGE VIEW OF THE SOVIET UNION. "FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, THE SOVIET UNION REMAINS A LONG-TERM THREAT AND WAR PREPARATIONS ARE MADE WITH THIS IN MIND". NEVERTHELESS, SZETU STATED THAT THE PRC SHOULD "BE PREPARED FOR A SOVIET ATTACK, EVEN IF IT SHOULD COME TOMMORROW". AS FAR AS RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION ARE CONCERNED, "CHINA IS ALWAYS PREPARED TO IMPROVE STATE-TO-STATE RELATIONS", BUT SZETU FELT THIS WAS UNLIKELY UNTIL THE "SECOND SOVIET REVOLUTION".

3. CONGENOFF SUGGESTED THAT THE APRIL 11 PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL SEEMED TO BE A VIELED ATTACK AGAINST SOME MILITARY OFFICERS FOR "MOUNTAIN STRONGHOLD MENTALITY SZETU RESPONDED THAT IT WAS UNLIEKLY THAT INDIVIDUAL MILITARY LEADERS WERE UNDER DIRECT ATTACK BUT NOTED THAT A RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT WAS UNDERWAY IN THE MILITARY AS PART OF THE NATIONWIDE RECTIFICATION MOVEMENT AGAINST THE "GANG OF FOUR" IN ANY CASE, SUCH PROBLEMS WITH "MOUNTAIN STRONGHOLD MENTALITY" AND "BUREACRATISM" ARE "INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS
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AMONG THE PEOPLE".

4. IN A LONG DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, SZETU SAID HE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND PRESIDENT CARTER'S ATTACKS ON THE SOVIET UNION. CONGENOFF REPLIED PRESIDENT CARTER WAS MERELY EXPRESSING THE FEELINGS OF MANY AMERICANS THAT OUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE AFRAID TO EXPRESS DISSATISFACTION OVER HUMAN RIGHTS' VIOLATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE SOVIET UNION, SZETU SAID, FROM HIS STANDPOINT, THERE MUST BE SOME POLITICAL REASON WHY PRESIDENT CARTER WAS CONTINUING TO CRITICIZE THE SOVIET UNION OVER CIVIL RIGHTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
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Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MPOL, SHUM, CH, UR, US, (SZETU KEUNG)
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